

# Illuminated Manuscripts

Romanesque Art  
1000–1200 AD



## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

are books written by hand in which the text is supplemented by the addition of decoration, such as decorated initials, borders and miniature illustrations.

The embellishment of text with gold or silver gave the impression that the page had been literally illuminated.

These manuscripts contained some of the best painting from the Romanesque period of art, as they were not restricted by the fresco medium, and could be highly detailed.





## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

These pictures were important as many of the people who looked at the books could not read or write.

In some cases the writer of the book did his or her own illustrations. However, most books were produced in a team rather than an individual. Often based in a monastery, the team would include an author, scribe and artist.

*Ex Bibliotheca MS. ET.  
Carlophianorum Aula B. MARIT.  
in Brindisi.*



**Q**UI NON ABIT IN CON-EL  
lio unpiorum & in illa peccatorum  
non stent & in carceribus pestilentie  
no sicut. **S**ed in lege dñi voluntas

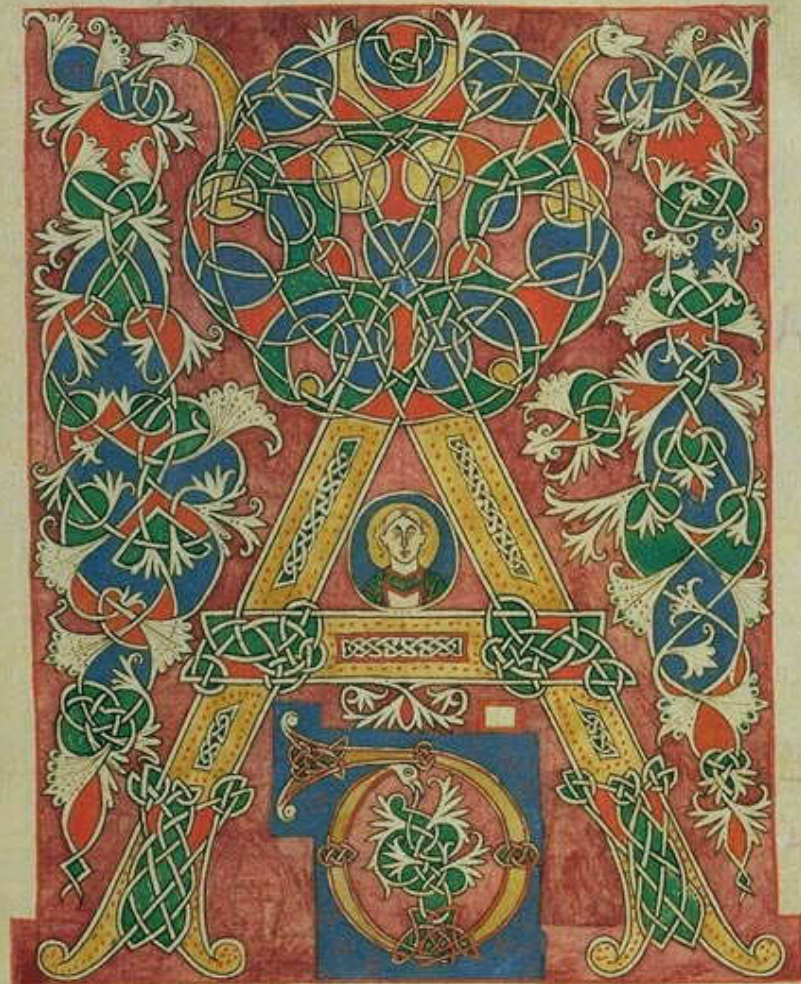
## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

The majority of illuminated manuscripts are of a religious nature, usually bibles, though secular texts and classical literature were also illuminated.

Had it not been for the scribes of late antiquity, the entire content of western heritage literature from Greece and Rome could have perished.

The very existence of illuminated manuscripts demonstrating the importance of ancient classical literature may have been responsible for their preservation.





TELENAVIANIMMAM

## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

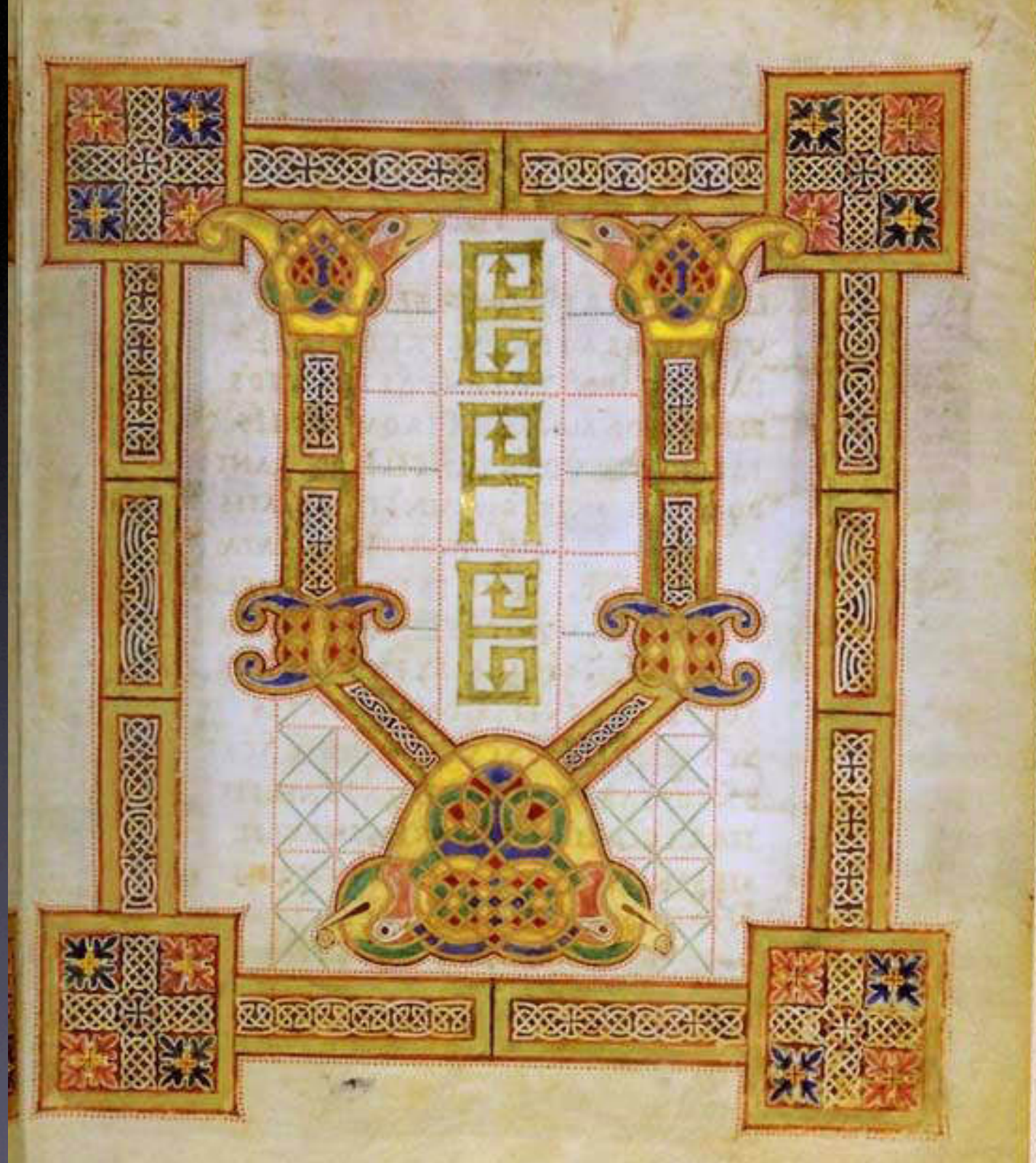
are a combination of Roman and Gallic, or what we sometimes call Celtic styles.

As most of the very earliest were produced in Ireland and Wales in isolated monasteries, they have an Gallic, or Celtic influence.

The patterns are Gallic, with interlocking and woven decoration.

The Latin text and miniature paintings are Roman styles, a legacy from Roman occupation.





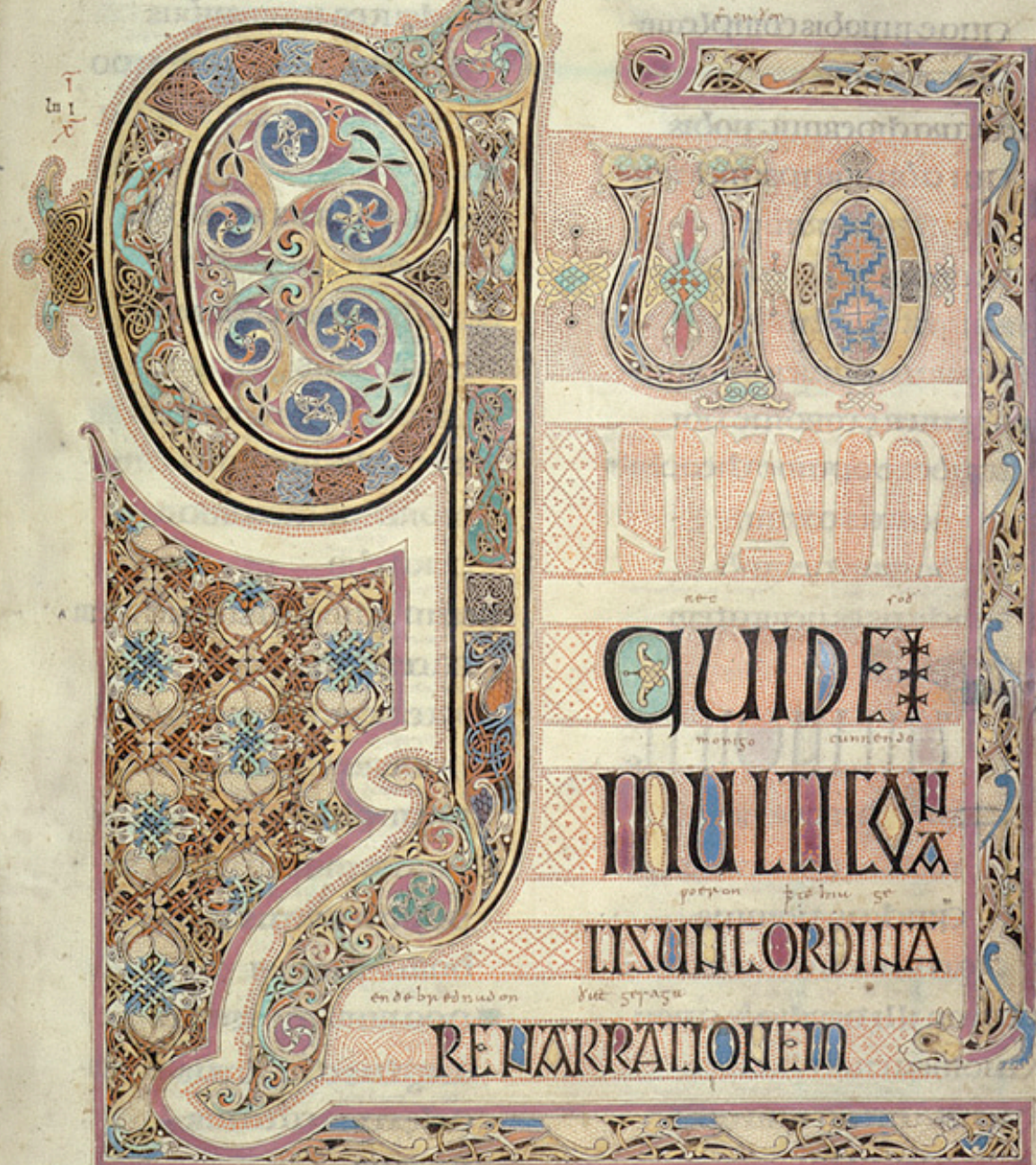


128  
139  
† Lucas uirilis 7

on gnan d' god r'pall

incipit euangelium

secundum lucam...



RE NARRATIONEM



q mortuis. nemo enim fuit disceptans. qd  
dicitur de corpore suo. Et ostendit se ipse  
q finem q dicitur huius. Qui autem est ius  
solus in pace in die festum. munitur  
dicitur in nomine ei. unde si qd qd  
bat. Ipe autem huius ius ostendit se ipse  
et qd ipse noster. qd qd ipse noster. Ipe autem  
ostendit se ipse noster. qd qd ipse noster. Ipe autem  
ostendit se ipse noster. qd qd ipse noster. Ipe autem

[illegible][illegible]

**E**t ille agnouit illos quod audierat philippi  
dixisse pluribus discipulis facite baptizate  
eos. quod illi non baptizauerunt. sed discipuli  
non intelligebant. et abierunt in galilee. **Q**ui  
tunc ait eis transite per samariam. et ibi  
invenietis samaritanos quod sic habuerunt  
quod dedit iacob ioseph filio suo. et ait  
iacob iacob. **I**lli ergo fatigati erant in itinere  
quia habebat sitis. et ibi ait eis quod  
venit mulier de samaria. et ait eis aqua  
dabitur ei. **T**um inquit discipulus ei ait  
dabitur ei. ut alius ametur. **D**ixit ergo  
mulier illa samaritana. **Q**uoniam tu inquit  
tu sis iudeus et me ioseph. quod sis mulier  
samaritana. **N**on enim convenit iudeis  
tractare. **S**ed ille respondit ei. **S**i scires  
dixit. quod quidvis tu inquit. tu scis  
enim iudeos ab eo. et dixisti quod unum.



# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

There are Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts, and those of other cultures and time periods, but in general, the term is for manuscripts produced in Europe during the Romanesque and Gothic periods of art, from around 1000 to 1500.





# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Rich people sometimes commissioned scribes and artists to produce books for them called psalters. These books contained the person's favorite psalms (religious songs that were sung or chanted in church).

As well as religious pictures these books often included illustrations that were personal to the person who commissioned the book.





# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

In the early Middle Ages nearly all illustrated manuscripts were produced by monks.

However, by the 15th century artists in the towns began to takeover this work. Although they rarely signed their work, tax records suggest that these artists were often women.





# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Christine de Pisan, the first female writer to earn a living from her pen, defended the status of women.

In this illustration, she depicts women who have served the cause of women (female warriors, politicians, good wives, lovers, and inventors, among others).





# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

These books were very expensive to produce. We know this because some of the account books of people who commissioned the illustrated books have survived. In 1383, Abbott Nicholas of Westminster decided he wanted a new missal (a book that contains details of the masses to be performed during the year). The book took two years to produce and cost several thousand dollars in today's money.

In 1450 Gutenberg invented movable type and hand written books were too time consuming and expensive to compete.





# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

During the Gothic period, 1220–1500, manuscripts were produced in all parts of Europe, and many contained secular art.

After the Black Death in the 1340's, the people that were left had more income and less faith in the church, so the new middle class could purchase manuscripts.











mal fu establis en  
fer. **Le est retouque**



a secont art  
si est logique  
qui est appel

lee dyalectique. Ceste  
si prouue faus et uoir  
et prouue p quor len  
congnoist et bñ et mal.  
Et qui sauroit toute  
logique il prouuerait  
et bien et mal sanz  
doutance. Car p bien  
fu crez et fez paradis et

a tierce art  
a non retou  
tique q est

et droiture et raison  
et ordonnance de pple q  
de ne soit pour soletie  
nue. Car li droit par  
quor li iugement soit  
fer et qui p raison et p  
droit sont esgarde en

court de roi et de la ro  
iement de rectoriq.  
De cest art furent de  
actales estraites et loiz  
et decrez qui ont mesli  
et en toutes causes  
et en touz droiz.

**Q**ui bien sauroit  
rectorique il connoi  
troit et tort et droit. p  
ferre tort est li bons p  
duz et dampnez. Et  
par ferre droit est lau  
ue et a l'amour de di  
eu. **Le est arismet**  
**que**



a quatre art  
si a non arit  
metique. C

ste art si uient apres  
rectorique et est mise  
en mi les .viij. arts. Car  
sanz li ne peut estre  
nulle des .viij. arts. alsi  
se pfaicement ne bñ  
seue enuement deuat  
que len sache ceste art.  
Car toutes y prennent



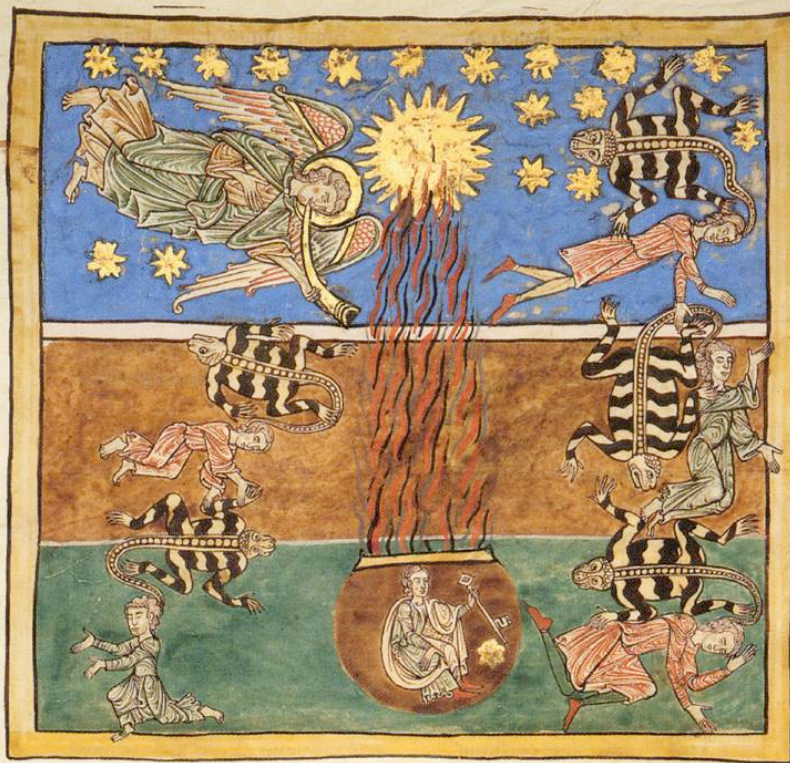


## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Figures became more animated, and had much more depth.

Perspective became more realistic, though still very distorted by Renaissance standards.





Incipit explanatio supra scripte historie.

**E**t quintus angelus tuba cecinit et audi stellas de celo cecidisse in terram. Et na stella corpus est multarum cadentium p peccata: sic p iob dicitur: bbscurentur stelle caligine et? S telle quippe huius noctis caligine tenebrant. quando et hi qui magnis iam virtutibus splendent adhuc de obscuritate culpe. aliquid retinentes sustinent. Sic namq: no nulli qui ante humanos oculos uelud magnis opibus lucent.

sed quia nec ipsa opa a mundo corde no prodeunt. captiui in occultis cogitationibus noctis huius tenebris obscurantur. & uia sepe ea que mundo corde no faciunt etiam opa amittunt. que bona intentione no faciunt. Et p hoc magis cecidit ope p qd illuminari poterant. Quia g nox prevalere pmittitur quando et int bona opa cordis intentio minime mundat. Sic ite recte: bbscurentur stelle caligine et? id est contra eos qui ante humanos oculos quasi



**S**alomon ad amateffore et en plusieurs maneres par brave experience de fait auons deu et apperceu le grant desir et la bonne volente que vous auez au bien de nous et de me royaume tant par les morales autoritez exemples et histories a nous par bons allegues

It is easy to see the difference in early Medieval, or Romanesque figures – left and late Medieval (Gothic) figures – right.





Early Medieval, or Romanesque figures are very similar to Byzantine art being produced in the Eastern Empire. It is flat, with extremely distorted, flat perspective – the feet are turned to the side, but the body is flat, similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs.

If this seems natural to you, try it. It is **not** a natural position.





Late Medieval, or Gothic art, has a real background, not a flat surface. Though the people are stacked up a bit, they are overlapping, with more depth to their bodies.



# Illuminated Manuscripts

Romanesque Art  
1000–1200 AD

You should be able to tell the difference between Romanesque and Gothic manuscripts by their style, content, and date.

You should know what materials are used, and who created these documents.

You should know some of the ways the Christian church influenced art of this period.

